

Coaching your team to optimum results



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The days of individual work in business are fading into the distance. Leaders today rely on teamwork – a coming together of individuals from various backgrounds who bring unique skills and expertise to a project. While many companies are embracing the “team” concept, the fact remains that many lack the know-how to build and nurture cohesive, productive teams.

As part of our annual series of National Breakfast Seminars, Randstad Canada invited leadership experts to discuss key elements that influence a team’s performance and the roles and responsibilities of a team leader. With the collaboration of Marie Legault, PhD, Leadership Consultant and Executive Coach and Michel Therrien, Organizational Psychology Consultant, we’ve compiled a summary of what we feel are the key points highlighted by our experts.

Best practices



Definition of a group. A group can be a collection of people who report to the same manager, but with relatively little interdependence and mutual accountability.

Definition of a team. A team is a small number of people (typically 3 to 12) who share common goals as well as the responsibilities and rewards for achieving them. Team members readily set aside their individual or personal needs for the greater good of the group. The combined strength of everyone on a team is greater than that of any one member.

The 4 C's of a performing team

Common Goal. Finding personal satisfaction in the achievement of team goals.

Commitment and Trust. Believing in the capacity of the team to achieve its objectives and in every team member's will to commit to them.

Communication. Putting in place means and channels that will allow for communication to be satisfying and productive.

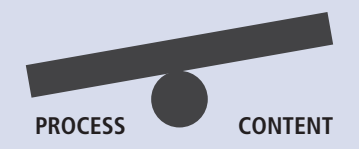
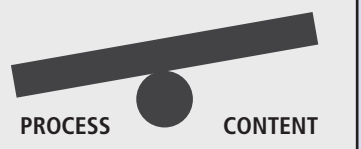
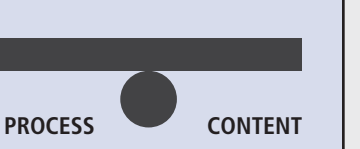
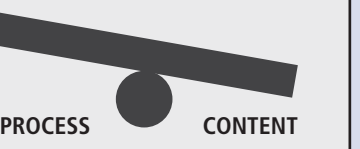
Complementarity. Identifying a mutual benefit to working together.

The key to success!

Two aspects are essential to the success of a team: the "what" and the "how".

- The "what" refers to CONTENT - that is, goals to achieve and tasks to accomplish.
- The "how" refers to PROCESSES - how a team functions, interpersonal relationships and interactions between team members.

It's the leader's responsibility to ensure that, as the team evolves, time and effort are wisely and effectively spent. From the time a team is formed until it disbands it passes through many stages, all equally important. American social psychologist Bruce Tuckman developed a five-stage model that allows for a clear understanding of team development. He calls it *Forming, Storming, Norming, High Performing, and Adjourning*.

1. Forming	2. Storming	3. Norming	4. High Performing	5. Adjourning
<p>This first step corresponds to the team coming together. The leader occupies a prominent role while team members seek guidance and confidence.</p>	<p>The second stage is characterized by interpersonal conflicts that may erupt while members try to organize themselves and learn to work together. Members may experience dissatisfaction.</p>	<p>During this stage, the team begins to actually produce work. Members understand the team's operating rules and know how to interact. A sense of belonging emerges.</p>	<p>At this stage, the team is truly productive. Each team member shares an interdependent relationship that enables optimal problem solving. Loyalty towards the team is strong.</p>	<p>The Adjourning stage is typically marked by the end of the project. It's time for post-mortems and celebrations!</p>
<p>The leader focuses on the PROCESS/the "how" and introduces the CONTENT/the "what."</p> 	<p>The leader continues to focus on the PROCESS/the "how" while giving time to CONTENT/the "what."</p> 	<p>The leader places as much emphasis on the PROCESS/the "how" as on the CONTENT/the "what."</p> 	<p>The CONTENT/the "what" is given greater emphasis. However, it's important to return to the PROCESS/the "how" when necessary.</p> 	
<p>Leader's Role</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translate the vision and values of the organization, as well as the project's overall objective • Define roles and expectations of each member • Explain the objectives and means of measurement • Assist the team in developing a process to guide members regarding operating rules • Listen in order to inspire confidence 	<p>Leader's Role</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and resolve conflicts • Create a climate of trust by listening to team members and communicating regularly with them • Provide feedback • Assist team members in acquiring the skills required to do the job 	<p>Leader's Role</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support while beginning to let the team take control • Break down barriers that delay work progress (e.g. overly long processes within the organization, budget problems, etc.) • Provide feedback • Meet with members individually to discuss their concerns and offer support 	<p>Leader's Role</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide feedback and encouragement frequently • Act as team resource • Hand full control over to the team 	<p>Leader's Role</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-mortem on the work, the project overall accomplishments, and knowledge gained • Explain, where relevant, the reasons why the team is adjourning • Prepare members for what comes next • Provide emotional support • Celebrate successes

Tips for leaders



Slow down to go faster. Before diving in, take a moment to engage employees and get them interested in the project, as well as plan and discuss the process and rules of operation. This will save time and money in the long run.

Take the time to build your team and guide its members. Schedule the necessary time for the Forming Stage in order to develop each team member's capacity to be both an individual and an integral part of the team.

Review Tuckman's team building stages as necessary. The development of a team is a dynamic, continuous process – the team membership may change or new conditions emerge that require a 'refresher'.

Listen, listen listen! A good leader listens to the needs of each individual member and the team as a whole. Observe the team through each stage, informing of the various stages and provide feedback throughout the process.

About the experts

[Marie Legault](#) is the President of Legault & Associates Leadership Development Inc., a firm dedicated to creating value for organizations through individuals. She designs and delivers integrated organizational and leadership development initiatives that support organizations' values, visions, objectives, and strategies. She facilitates the learning process with effective technologies, and delivers programs tailored to meet the needs of different management levels, generational groups, and cultures.

[Michel Therrien](#) is an organizational psychology consultant at Société Pierre Boucher with over 25 years of consulting experience. His career has been highlighted by a number of key experiences, which include overseeing teams of managers and professionals, performing negotiations, and providing an advisory role in the human resources field. His professional activities have led him to develop solid expertise in evaluating and developing competencies.

As a leadership coach, Marie guides and supports leaders and executive teams through a process in which they assess, plan, and implement new skills and behaviours to attain higher levels of professional and personal satisfaction and productivity. She holds a Ph.D. in Human and Organizational Systems, a Master of Arts in Leadership and Training, a Bachelor of Commerce, an Executive Coaching Graduate Certificate, and a Professional Training & Development Certificate.

He has also taught at such establishments as the Université de Montréal, the École des Hautes Études Commerciales and the Royal Military College in Kingston. He has served as a human resources consultant and trainer at the École des Hautes Études Commerciales's development centre. Mr. Therrien has also coached many managers, particularly in their integration phase.

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